Talking to children about coronavirus (COVID-19).

# Talking to children about coronavirus

If a child brings up coronavirus or asks questions, it is important to acknowledge how they may be feeling and to answer questions as honestly as possible.

This will help them feel informed and understand what is happening. Also, it is important students understand the low risk of serious illness.

## 1. Be aware of your own behaviour

It's important that adults understand the effect their own behaviour can have on children. If you're visibly upset or react in a way that suggests you're fearful, children will take their cues from you.

## 2. Stick to the facts

Ensure you stick to the facts. This will help keep conversations calm, considered, and constructive.

Sharing factual information should help reassure children that there is no immediate risk to themselves, their friends or their family.

## 3. Explain what efforts are being made to contain the virus

Authorities are responding quickly. Travel in and out of the affected areas has been restricted, and scientists are working to develop a vaccine.

## 4. Offer practical advice

For the time being, the easiest way to reduce the risk of being affected by viruses of any sort (including the common cold) is to practise good hygiene.

These are easy habits for children to adopt, and should help them feel as though they're able to exert some control over their circumstances.

# More information

For more advice about how to talk to young people about coronavirus (COVID-19), go to the following websites:

* [headspace](https://headspace.org.au/young-people/how-to-cope-with-stress-related-to-covid-19/)
* [ReachOut](https://schools.au.reachout.com/natural-disasters/dealing-with-bad-world-news)
* [Emerging Minds](https://emergingminds.com.au/)